

Of Mice and Men: Viewing Guide

I. Vocabulary

flashback: alteration in story order in which the plot moves back in time to show events that have taken place earlier than those already shown.

Point of View (POV) shot: a shot taken from the position of a character's eyes. It shows the viewer what things look like from the character's position.

Wide angle: the use of a wide-angle lens to create a shot that captures a wide range of elements.

Crosscutting: editing that alternates shots of two or more lines of action occurring in different places. It is often used during dramatic sequences to increase tension.

II. Cast/Crew

Unlike the novel *Of Mice and Men*, which was essentially created by one man, John Steinbeck, the film version is a collaborative effort. Each person on screen and behind the scene influences the overall film.

1. Who wrote the screenplay?
 2. Who is the director?
 3. Who plays George?
 - Do you think this was good casting? What is different about the looks and behavior of the actor from what you imagined?
 4. Who plays Lennie?
 - Does the actor portray Lennie differently from what you imagined while reading? Does the actor bring anything new to the character that emphasizes a characteristic?
-

III. Film

5. What is George riding in the first sequence?
6. How is the movie a flashback?
7. What is gained by making the film a flashback as opposed to the way it is presented in the book?

8. What does the director imply is the reason for George and Lennie being chased by dogs and shotguns?
9. How does the filmmaker imply this?
10. During the conversation between George and Lennie about the mouse, how is the setting different?
11. What images does the filmmaker use to establish setting?
12. Since the filmmaker cannot use language to create metaphors, how does he create the comparison of Lennie and a dog when Lennie drinks from water?
13. When George and Lennie are talking about the ranch, George abruptly stops talking. What does the shot of George imply he is thinking?
14. How does the film portray the boss differently from the book?
15. What does the close-up shot of the boss's food achieve?
16. When Lennie is lifting bags in the field, how does the filmmaker make it clear to the viewer that Lennie strong?
17. When George sees Lennie working and sees Slim seeing Lennie working, what are George's feelings? How can you tell?

ADDED SCENE!

18. What does the scene with Curley's wife and George add to the story? How does it change the characterization of Curley's wife?
19. How does the director make a connection between George and Candy when Carlson is going out to shoot the dog? And what does the filmmaker achieve by making this connection?
20. There is a wide-angle shot of Curley, Curley's wife, and the boss, the only characters that are related to each other. What is gained by showing these three characters together using a wide angle shot?
21. What is Lennie laughing at? How is this different from the book?

22. What is added by the scene where George cleans the blood off Lennie's face? What does this scene communicate about George?
23. How is the scene with Crooks different? Was this a positive or negative change? Why?
24. What is different about how Lennie killed the pup? What does this change about Lennie's character?
25. Seeing Curley react to his wife's death is different from reading about it. What is strange about the way Curley reacts?

IV. Short Essay. Answer the following question in paragraph form.

26. If you were to remake this film, what things would you change or add? What would you be sure to keep the same? Think about film technique, casting, adding and deleting scenes from the book, music, and so forth.